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ABSTRACT

Some leading students of social stratification in the United States present empirical and theoretical essays about the institutional contexts that shape careers. These 15 essays work toward the goal of identifying and assessing the processes by which a birth cohort is distributed in the stratification system, given its position of origin in that system. The papers of Part 1 suggest the broad conceptualization of social stratification that will be needed for the new generation of research in this area, a so-called fourth generation of stratification research. Rather than modeling patterns of intergenerational or career mobility, research is beginning to identify and analyze the dispersion processes. Papers in Part 2 explore how educational settings and processes generate a cumulative dispersion of student performances, a major contributor to social stratification. Part 3 explores the links between education and the labor force, making it clear that the school-work linkage is an important and highly varied concept. The papers in Part 4 focus on social system contexts, with a concern for the relevance of mobility patterns in the changing societal systems in which stratification occurs. References follow each chapter. (Contains 39 tables and 22 figures.) (SLD)

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